EXPERT GROUP MEETING - TOWARDS A STANDARD INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION ON ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

20-21 JUNE 2016

TWO UNITED NATIONS BUILDING. DC2-1684
NEW YORK, UNITED STATES

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Day 1: 20 June 2016, Monday

Time	Session/Objective
9.30-10:00	**Opening; introduction of all participants; Key objectives of the meeting**
10:00-10:50	**Session 1:** SEEA perspective on key requirements of ecosystem service classification to be used, among other things for the compilation of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounts
10:50-11:10	*Break*
11:10-11:45	**Continue on Session 1**
11:45-12:30	**Session 2 :** Discussion on the stated principles underlying CICES, FEGS-CS and NESCS and their roles for the compilation of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounts
	Lunch break
13:45-15:15	Continue on Session 2:
15:15-15:30	*break*
15:30-17:30	**Session 3**: Experiences and reflections on using ecosystem service classification system for the compilation of ecosystem accounting; Discussion on the potential overlaps, differences and complementarities, and the roles of the different ecosystem services classifications for the compilation of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounts (16.30-17.30)

Day 2: 21 June 2016, Tuesday

Time	Session
9.00-10:20	**Session 4:** Discussion on key criteria and principles for a multi-purpose classification in the design of a common ecosystem service classification system (or system of linked-up classifications), among other things for the compilation of SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounts
10:50-11:10	*break*
11:10-12:45	Continue on Session 4
12:45-14:00	*Lunch break*
14:00-15:30	**Session 5:** **Discuss possible structure of the (combined systems on) classification of ecosystem services (based on agreed criteria and principles) and relations with other classifications used in official statistics**
15:30-15:45	*Coffee break*
15:45-16:30	Continue on Session 5
16:30-17:30	**Session 6:** Next steps towards a standardized, multi-purpose international classification (or system of linked-up classifications), including for the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting (16.30-17.30)

PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA

Session 1: (20 Jun, 9.30-11.45)

SEEA perspective on key requirements of ecosystem service classification to be used, among other things for the compilation of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounts (10.00-11.45 – break at 10.50)

Presenter: UNSD

This session discusses the key requirements of ecosystem service classification to be used for the compilation of the various accounts in the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting (SEEA-EEA). During the consultation of the SEEA-EEA Technical Recommendation, the following were the key points made with regard to the ecosystem service classification:

- Recognize and define the similarities and differences between a FINAL ecosystem services classification (FEGS-CS and NESCS) and CICES and how these differences dictate how the possible outcomes of using the different approaches

- Clarify the boundaries between thinking of ecosystem services and benefits and thinking of final ecosystem services and beneficiaries (or users).

- What are the definitions and roles of final ecosystem services (and/or FEGS) and intermediate services.

- Explain the expectations concerning the nature of the relationship between ecosystem assets, ecosystem services stocks and flows of ecosystem services

- Define and discuss the nature of ecological production functions (Ecol-PF) and economic production functions (Econ-PF)

- Describe the assumption concerning the development of ecosystem services based on MA IV classes and the EPA approach

- Measurability of ecosystem services and how to determine the priority ecosystem services for measurement[1]

- Better describe the link between biodiversity, carbon sequestration and ecosystem services – how do CICES and FEGS/FES treat them

- Better define/describe cultural services

UNSD will provide a 30-minute presentation on the key requirements, followed by an open discussion on the accounting requirement and the missing elements in the existing ecosystem service classification for the compilation of the SEEA Experimental ecosystem Accounts as well as on what could be resolved at this stage, noting that its connection with development of ecosystem services classification should not be assumed but could be explored.

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[1] The issue can be divided into a FEGS/FES component and a CICES component. For each, how would or could priority "*services*" be identified?

Session 2: (20 June, 11.45-15.15)

Discussion on the stated principles underlying CICES, FEGS-CS and NESCS and the roles of the different ecosystem services classifications for the compilation of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounts

At the time of drafting the SEEA EEA the ecosystem service classification known to the drafters was the CICES. Immediately following its public release, the existence of another classification system developed by the US EPA, FEGS and NESCS became known to the SEEA project. These three approaches to ecosystem services classification are distinct but there is an ongoing discussion on the potential overlaps, differences and complementarities.

This session discusses the stated principles underlying CICES, FEGS and NESCS and examines their relevance and applicability for the compilation of the various accounts in the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting (such as the ecosystem service supply account, ecosystem service use account)

The custodians of each classification will provide a 20-minute presentation on the following, followed by a 25-minute discussion time:

- Purpose and nature of the classification, and a description of the main uses
- Scope and coverage of the classification
- Principles used in constructing the classification
- Concepts of "ecosystem services" used in the classification
- Structure of the classification
- Applicability for ecosystem accounting

CICES (11.45-12.30)

Presenter: Jan Erik Petersen/Roy Haines-Young (to be confirmed)

FEGS-CS (13.45-14.30)

Presenter: Dixon Landers (to be confirmed)

NESCS (14.30- 15.15)

Presenter: Charles Rhodes (to be confirmed)

Session 3: (20 June, 15.30-17.30)

Experiences and reflections on using ecosystem service classification system for the compilation of ecosystem accounting (15.30-16.30)

This section discusses country experience and the lesson in using existing ecosystem service classification for the compilation of ecosystem accounting.

Discussants: Statistics Canada, Conservation International, Europe, US, UK (to be confirmed, 5-10 minutes each)

Discussion on the potential overlaps, differences and complementarities, and the roles of the different ecosystem services classifications for the compilation of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounts (16.35-17.30)

It would be very opportune for the expert group to use this discussion time to provide to some clear advice to compilers and users about the options for the compilation of the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounts[2].

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[2] Key questions to consider include which classification works for which purpose and what are the user expectations.

Session 4 (21 June, 9.30-12.45)

Discussion on key criteria and principles for a multi-purpose classification in the design of a common ecosystem service classification system (or system of linked-up classifications), among other things for the compilation of SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounts (9.00-12.45, break at 10.45)

This session aims to reach consensus on certain methodological issues and establish key criteria, scope and principles for a common (or combined systems on) on ecosystem service classification. Participants are expected to contribute to the discussion on the following key questions:

Key questions to discuss:

a. Agreement on the purpose of the classification and on whether such classification should be multi-purpose classification or not. If such classification is agreed to be multi-purpose, what are the considerations required in order for such classification to serve multiple purposes, including for project's cost-benefit analysis; national accounting, administrative purposes; also for mapping, valuations, accounting etc.?

b. Agreement on whether the scope of classification should be on "final" ecosystem service or not.

c. If we have linked classifications for ecosystem assets, functions, services, benefits and beneficiaries, etc, what they should be.

d. Agreement on rules for distinguishing between intermediate and final services, and between services, goods and benefits in the classification system

e. Discussion on the definition of "final" ecosystem services and agreement on the process of arriving an agreed definition that address and satisfy the needs of various audiences (include but not only be limited to accounting) and has to lead to a multi-purpose classification development?

f. Agreement on the whether biotic and abiotic services (natural resources, land and global/atmospheric services) to be covered

g. Discussion on the degree of natural capital as well as human capital and labor explicitly involved in the end-points in questions (i.e. cultivated biological resources such as cows, crops, plantation timber), and whether the connection to underlying ecological structures and processes should be taken into account

h. Discussion on the following 2 cases and seek to reconcile the difference

    a) Whether the final ecosystem services from agricultural farmland is crop or nutrient uptake.

    b) How to treat pollination service that can be considered as both final and intermediary service

i. Discussion on the approach in classifying those ecosystem services that satisfy the classification principle and criteria but is considered difficult to measure. One approach is to recommend classification category should apply principle-based definitions that are not constraint by measurement difficulties. Proxy can be used to measure such category.

j. Discussion on the criteria or parameters used to define the economy/environment boundary

k. Define the source of ecosystem services (final and intermediary) on the ecosystem asset

Other questions to cover (further elaboration is required):

- ESS accounts to cover 'supply', 'demand' and 'capacity' ?

- conceptual foundation: ES cascade model / others ?

- defining the source of es/FEGS on the ecosystem asset – discussion on needs and desired

Session 5 (21 June, 14.00-16.30)

Discuss possible structure of the (combined systems on) classification of ecosystem services (based on agreed criteria and principles) and relations with other classifications used in official statistics (14.00-16.30, break at 15.30)

This session discusses possible structure of the common (combined systems on) classification on ecosystem services. The discussion will center on the following key questions:

a. Discussion on how to arrange the context of the classification in such a way that aggregations are based upon similarity criteria which are meaningful for analysis and comparison. Can we test different aggregation and disaggregation rules, for example sector-based aggregations (e.g. services contributing to agriculture, tourism, etc.)? What are the applicable rules in this context?

b. Discussion on whether the exercise of cross-reading and establishing correspondence between the final services defined in CICES, FEGS-CS and NESCS should be pursued. And if this is agreeable, the process of doing (e.g. building correspondence table, develop tools for inter-comparison).

c. Discuss the nature of the common classification i.e. whether it is a classification of essential characteristic (type) or a classification of purpose?

d. Discussion on what should be top-level category of the classification? Do we need to develop alternative category (to the top-level category proposed by the Millennium Assessment)? Are the currently top-level categories defined by the Millennium Assessment i.e. provisioning services, regulating services and cultural services appropriate?

e. Discussion on how many hierarchical sub-divisions with on purpose the sub-division serves, the criteria in delineating sub-category

f. Discussion on the relations with classification used on official statistics such as ISIC, CPC and land cover classification

g. Discussion on how to avoid double counting

h. Discussion on the metrics and indicators and their relationship to use and users

Other question to cover (further elaboration is required)

- Discussion on how to operationalize the "ecological production function" concept in designing the classification

Session 6 (21 June, 16.30-17.30)

Next steps towards a standardized, multi-purpose international classification (or system of linked-up classifications), including for the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting (16.30-17.30)

- Recommendation for the compilation of ecosystem accounts
- Next steps towards a standardized, multi-purpose international classification (or system of linked-up classifications), including for the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting